

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



Rick Scott
Governor

Celeste Philip, MD, MPH
State Surgeon General

Vision: To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

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FREE RAPID HIV TESTING OFFERED ON NATIONAL BLACK HIV/AIDS AWARENESS DAY, FEBRUARY 7

**Contact:**

Jennifer S. Sexton
Jennifer.Sexton@flhealth.gov
941-624-7279

Port Charlotte, Fla. – Free, confidential, rapid HIV testing will be offered in recognition of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day by the Florida Department of Health in Charlotte County from 1 p.m. – 4 p.m. on Tuesday, February 7, at 1100 Loveland Blvd, Port Charlotte.

The goal of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day is to encourage African Americans to get tested and know their HIV status, get educated about the transmission modes of HIV/AIDS, get involved in their local community, and get treated if they are currently living with HIV or are newly diagnosed.

“Compared to other racial/ethnic groups in the United States, blacks/African Americans have a disproportionate burden of HIV and AIDS” said Dr. Frank Lepore, Administrator for the Florida Department of Health in Charlotte County. “While blacks represent 6.4% of Charlotte County’s population, they accounted for 44% of new HIV diagnoses in 2015.”

For 22 consecutive years (1988-2010), HIV has been the leading cause of death for blacks between the ages of 25 and 44 in Florida. Since 2013, HIV dropped to the 5th leading cause of death among blacks. HIV was also the leading cause of death among black women 25-44, but dropped to 3rd in 2014.

Unfortunately, many of those who are infected with HIV are unaware of their status and may unknowingly transmit the virus to others. Testing is critical for prevention of HIV in black communities. It is hoped that blacks will mark February 7 of every year as their annual or bi-annual day to get tested for HIV. This is vital for those individuals who are sexually active and those at high risk of contracting HIV.

For more information about the free Rapid HIV Testing being offered on February 7, please call Cheryl Adams at (941) 624-7200 extension 7265.

Florida Department of Health**in Charlotte County**

1100 Loveland Boulevard, Port Charlotte, FL 33980
PHONE: 941/624-7200 • FAX: 941/624-7258

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About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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